duration of 5 years were signed in Lisbon. Portugal on July 3, 2001. The POC contains financial and other terms for implementation of joint research projects, exchange visits etc. The areas of cooperation identified include Computer Software and Applications; Cellular and Molecular Biology; Biotechnology and Physical and Material Sciences. The areas of cooperation in the MOU include Ocean Energy, Ocean Dynamics and Modelling, Remote Sensing for Ocean Observation, Environmental Quality, Pollution and Contamination Processes, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Underwater Instrumentation, Remotely Operatable and Autonomous Vehicles and Systems for Underwater Exploration, Sea-bed Mining etc. Action has been initiated for having a joint workshop on Ocean Science & Technology in India during November 2001 to develop new projects and identify areas of scientific and technological work.

Alarming level of Nitrous Oxide

3660. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news appearing in the Indian Express dated the 17th November, 2000 to the effect that a study suggests that alarming levels of nitrous oxide could alter the climate; if so, what is Government's reaction in this regard;

(b) whether Government have conducted further detailed studies in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) to (c)Yes Sir. The report is based on a study conducted by the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), Goa a constituent unit of CSIR, that suggests Arabian Sea as a strong source of nitrous oxide, one of the green house gases. The government is seeking to develop time-series of data of ambient nitrous oxide concentrations to assess the cause of these high concentrations.

(d) Does not arise.